

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A utility knife tool for hand operation by a user, comprising:
 - a) a handle with a distal portion and a proximal portion;
 - b) a blade secured to and extending from said distal portion, said blade having a cutting edge;
 - c) a blade cover that moves between an operating position in which the blade is exposed, and a safety position in which at least the a cutting edge and a portion of a side of the blade is covered, and that is biased towards the safety position;
a trigger positioned underside the handle, operable in a generally distal to proximal movement; and
 - d) ~~a manually triggered~~ self-locking release assembly, internal to the handle, that operates to unlock the cover when the a finger-operated trigger is operated; so that the cover can be retracted, and operates to re-lock the cover locking assembly upon manual retraction of the cover; so that the cover automatically locks in place when the cover is returned to the safety position.
2. (Previously presented) The utility knife tool of Claim 1 wherein the cover retracts into the handle.
3. (Previously presented) The utility knife tool of Claim 2 wherein the cover and the trigger are each biased by springs.
4. (Currently amended) The utility knife tool of Claim 2 wherein ~~the release assembly is actuated by a trigger~~ movement of the blade cover is parallel to movement of the trigger, located on an inferior surface of the handle.
5. (Previously presented) The utility knife tool of Claim 2 wherein the cover retracts linearly into the handle.
- 6-10. Canceled.

11. (New) The utility knife tool of Claim 1 wherein the handle has sufficient curvature, and the trigger is positioned relative to the curved handle, such that the tool can be held in the hand of a user with the blade extending from the handle substantially parallel to the user's forearm, and the trigger can be operated by flexing the user's forefinger towards the forearm.
12. (New) The utility knife tool of Claim 1 wherein the handle has sufficient curvature, and the trigger is positioned relative to the curved handle, such that the tool can be held like a handgun, with the blade extending from the handle substantially parallel to the user's forearm, and with the trigger of the tool utilizing a similar motion to a trigger of the handgun.